CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

OF THE

EVACUATION OF NEW YORK CITY,

Monday, November 26th, 1883,

WITH AN

HISTORICAL OUTLINE

AND

ORDER OF PROCESSION.

COMPILED BY

JOHN BRETTE.

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1883.

Names of the General Committee charged with the preparations for the celebration of Evacuation Day.

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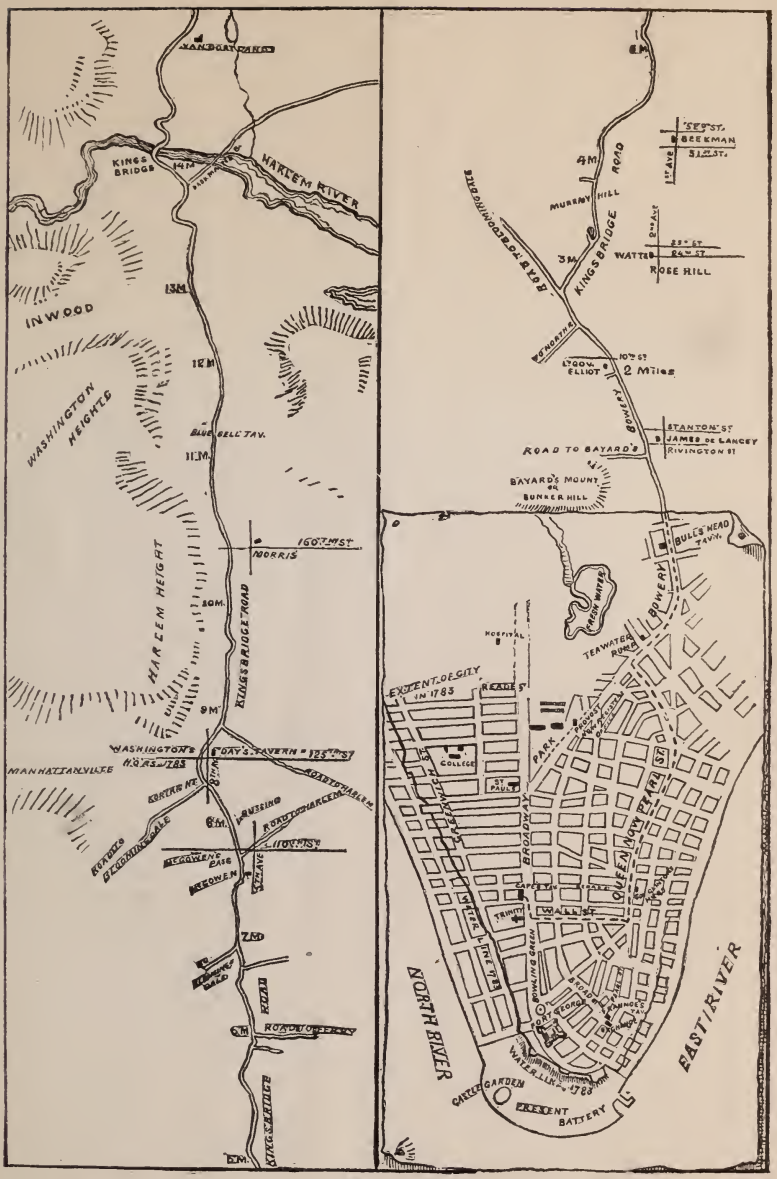

MAP

Showing the points of interest along the route in 1783. The Water Line as it then existed in the lower part of the City, will be readily observed. The exact locations of the Taverns and other Land Marks mentioned in the following pages, are carefully indicated.

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The Municipality of the City of New York, by public resolution, determined, on the 9th day of January last, to commemorate in a proper manner the centennial anniversary of the Evacuation of the city by the British. This final military act of the war occurred on the 25th day of November, 1783. The anniversary falling this year on Sunday, Monday, the 26th, was appointed for the ceremonies. The resolution of the Common Council provided for co-operation of the Chamber of Commerce of the State of New York and of the New York Historical Society in the direction of the celebration, and invited other organizations, civic and military, to take part therein. In pursuance of this resolution the Society of the Cincinnati, the Veterans of the War of 1812 and of the Mexican War, the Loyal Legion, the Grand Army of the Republic, and the Veterans of the National Guard of the State of New York, and a large number of civic organizations have also resolved to unite with the committee. In presenting to the public a few historical facts, as well as a brief account of the ceremonies which will take place on the 26th instant, it is the desire of the committee and the purpose of the writer to give a general outline of some of the momentous events which led to the evacuation. Several interesting facts are given which have not been heretofore made public, and therefore interest thousands of those who will witness the memorable pageant.

THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE.

The protracted struggle between Great Britain and America, known as the War of the Revolution, commenced in 1775 and ended in 1783. Punctually at twelve o'clock on the morning of April 8th, one hundred years ago, the proclamation of peace between the two countries was read by the Town Major at the City Hall, then in Wall Street, in the presence of a great number of inhabitants. Though the proclamation bears date of the 14th day of February, 1783, it should be remembered that the "preliminaries" were signed on the 20th of January of that year. Washington announced the fact to his army on the 19th of April. New York had been in British hands since September 15th, 1776. Fighting substantially ended with the battle of Yorktown in October, 1781, its decisive nature compelling the British virtually to admit their inability successfully to continue the struggle. Six months after they displayed a willingness, if not an anxiety,

to cease hostilities, by withdrawing troops from Southern territory. Though comparatively few shots were fired for two years before evacuation, the terrible suspense incident to and occasioned by the military occupation was not finally relieved until the 25th of November, 1783, when the last boat, filled with British "red-coats," turned its prow south of the Battery towards the British ships which were lying at anchor off Staten Island waiting to receive them. Washington, with Governor Clinton and others, in the exercise of their martial and civic functions, were called upon to carry out the work of pacification and internal order. With the promptness and judgment which characterized his military career, the General immediately undertook the difficult task. Treaty claims were to be adjusted, destruction and chaos were to be supplanted by order, martial law by civic authority, and, more than all, the great commander and his adherents were face to face with the social, financial, and industrial problems of a great nation, whose vitals had been sapped by the stern ravages of the enemy. As New York had been the pivotal point and headquarters of the invading army for seven long and anxious years, it was natural that Washington should desire to enter in triumph the city which he had been compelled to abandon years before in humiliation.

PREPARATIONS FOR WASHINGTON'S ENTRY INTO THE CITY.

When peace was declared, Sir Guy Carleton, who in May, 1782 had succeeded Sir Henry Clinton in command of the British forces, promptly began to prepare for the evacuation by disbanding all the loyalist regiments and dispatching many of the regulars to England, Nova Scotia, and the West Indies. A little over 6,000 troops, including detachments of the light infantry, grenadiers, royal artillery, 17th dragoons, and the 7th, 22d, 23d, 38th, 40th, 43d, 76th, and 80th foot regiments were to await final orders. Much correspondence took place between Sir Guy Carleton and General Washington, and all trustworthy accounts agree that the dilatory attitude of the British, after peace was declared, caused some concern even to Washington himself. In May, the two rival commanders met on board the "Greyhound," off Dobbs' Ferry, on the Hudson, where solemn assurances were given that no time would be lost in dispatching the remnant of the British army. When, therefore, Sir Guy Carleton fixed the 25th of November as the final day, Washington, who had in the meantime disbanded almost all his Continental army at West Point and Newburg, prepared to take possession of the city the

moment the British left it. Washington and Governor Clinton stayed for several days at Cortlandt House, the residence of Frederick Van Cortlandt, near Yonkers, an historical landmark, still occupied by the family. An extract from memoranda left by Lieut.-Governor Pierre Van Cortlandt, supplies some interesting details of the movements of the civic and military authorities. He said :

"N. B.—I went from Peekskill, Tuesday the 18th of November, in company with his Excellency Governor Clinton, Col. Benson and Col. Campbell. Lodged that night with General Cortlandt at Croton River, proceeded and lodged Wednesday night at Edw. Couenhowen's, where we met his Excellency General Washington and his aides. The next night lodged with Mr. Frederick V. Cortlandt at the Yonkers, after having dined with Mr. Lewis Morris, Friday morning we rode in company with the Commander-in-Chief as far as the Widow Day's, at Harlem, where we held a council. Saturday I rode down to Mr. Stuyvesant's; stayed there until Tuesday, then rode triumphant into the city with the Commander."

On the 19th the great commander arrived at Day's Tavern, near the junction of 125th street and 8th avenue, attended by the State and army officers, while a portion of the American troops proceeded to take positions some distance below. The news of the intended triumphal entry stirred the loyal inhabitants to great enthusiasm. A meeting of a "large and respectable" number of people who had, during the Summer returned from their seven years' exile, was held at Cape's Tavern, Broadway, followed by another on the 20th, at which the arrangements connected with the entry of Washington and his army were discussed, and it was resolved that the place of meeting between the military and the people should be at the Bull's Head Tavern, kept by Mrs. Varian. On the 24th, Sir Guy Carleton addressed the following letter to General Washington:

NEW YORK, 24 November, 1783.

Sir: Agreeably to the notification given you in my letter of the 19th instant, I propose to withdraw from this place to-morrow at noon, by which time I conclude your troops will be near the barrier. The guards from the redoubts and on the East River shall be first withdrawn; but an officer will be sent out to give information to your advanced guard when the troops move. * * *

I am, Sir, etc.,

GUY CARLETON.

To His Excellency General Washington.

In the meantime the citizens appointed to conduct the order of receiving their Excellencies, General Washington and Governor Clinton, were busily engaged in preparing a grand welcome. In the public prints of that date we find the following notification:

NEW YORK, November 24, 1783.

The committee appointed to conduct the order of receiving their excellencies Governor Clinton and General Washington

Beg leave to inform their fellow citizens that the troops under the command of Major-General Knox will take possession of the city at the hour agreed on, Tuesday; as soon as this may be performed, he will request the citizens who may be assembled on horseback, at the Bowling Green, the lower end of the Broadway, to accompany him to meet their excellencies Governor Clinton and General Washington at the Bull's Head in the Bowery, the citizens on foot to assemble at or near the Tea-water Pump at Fresh-water.

The following order of procession was also issued:

A party of horse will precede their excellencies and be on their flanks. After the General and Governor will follow the Lieutenant-governor and members of the Council for the temporary government of the southern parts of the State—the gentlemen on horseback eight in front—those on foot, in the rear of the horse, in like manner. Their excellencies, after passing down Queen street, and the line of troops up the Broadway, will alight at Cape's Tavern. The Committee hope to see their fellow-citizens conduct themselves with decency and decorum on this joyful occasion.

The arrangements for the reception being now completed, with the assurance of the British commander that his army would leave the city at noon, the people patiently awaited the entry of the patriots. Washington reached the encampment in the morning, and the signal was given to move forward to the city, the American pickets being already stationed near the Dove Tavern, within five miles of the City. Marching along the Kingsbridge road, the American troops pursued a southern course, taking peaceful possession step by step of the positions which the British troops had abandoned. Entering the Bowery they proceeded as far as Bull's Head Tavern, where the Thalia theatre (so long known as the Bowery theatre) now stands. Pursuing the instructions laid down in the above named notification, the citizens, many of whom were on horseback, then joined the procession. A detachment of the American troops, a little before one o'clock, marched into and took possession of the city. The civic procession then moved along the Bowery to Chatham street. At the corner of Orange street (now Baxter) and Chatham street, where stood the old Tea-water Pump, a large number of citizens on foot fell in line, and the whole cavalcade then turned into Queen, now Pearl street. Proceeding up Wall the procession arrived in Broadway opposite Cape's Tavern, on the north of Trinity Churchyard, the site on which the Boreel building now stands. Here the detachment of the military were in waiting, and congratulations were exchanged between the military and civic dignitaries.

The military detachment which took possession of the city had entered in the following order:

1. A corps of Dragoons.
2. Advance-Guard of Light Infantry.
3. A corps of Artillery.
4. Battalion of Light Infantry.
5. Battalion of Massachusetts Troop.
6. Rear-guard.

The General and Governor with the Civic Procession made their public entry in the following order :

1. Their Excellencies the General and Governor, with their suites on horseback.
2. Lieutenant-Governor, and the members of the Council for the temporary government of the Southern district, four abreast.
3. Major-General Knox and the officers of the army, eight abreast.
4. Citizens on horseback, eight abreast.
5. The speaker of the Assembly and Citizens on foot, eight abreast.

Washington and Clinton were escorted by a body of Westchester Light-Horse under the command of Captain Delavan.

In the evening Governor Clinton gave a public dinner at Fraunces' Tavern, at which the Commander-in-Chief and other general officers were present. After dinner the following toasts were drank :

1. The United States of America.
2. His Most Christian Majesty.
3. The United Netherlands.
4. The King of Sweden.
5. The American Army.
6. The Fleet and Army of France which have served in America.
7. The Memory of those Heroes who have Fallen for our Freedom.
8. May our Country be grateful to her Military Children.
9. May Justice support what Courage has gained.
10. The vindicators of the Rights of Mankind in every Quarter of the Globe.
11. May America be an Asylum to the persecuted of the Earth.
12. May a close Union of the States guard the Temple they have erected to Liberty.
13. May the Remembrance of *This Day* be a Lesson to Princes.

Washington and Clinton were also the recipients of many congratulatory addresses from returning exiles and citizens. In reply to one of these Washington, on the 20th of November, gave expression to the following sentiments :

"May the Tranquility of your City be perpetual ; may the Ruins soon be repaired, commerce flourish, science be fostered, and all the civil and social virtues be cherished, in the same illustrious manner which formerly reflected so much credit on the Inhabitants of New York. In fine, may every species of Felicity attend you, gentlemen, and your worthy fellow-citizens."

IRELAND'S SYMPATHY AND CONGRATULATION.

In all that has been written on this subject it appears to have been generally overlooked that among the congratulatory addresses presented to Washington, none found a warmer place in his heart than that of the members of the "Voluntary Associations and other inhabitants of the kingdom of Ireland." The efforts then being made in the cause of freedom by Ireland's down-trodden sons were well known to Washington, and his reply will strike a responsive chord in the heart of every Irishman to-day. The great Commander wrote :

"It was not an uninteresting consideration to learn that the Kingdom of Ireland by a bold and manly conduct had obtained redress of many of its grievances ; and it is much to be wished that the blessings of equal liberty, and unrestrained commerce, may yet prevail more extensively. In the meantime, you may be assured, gentlemen, that the hospitality and beneficence of your countrymen to our brethren who have been prisoners of war are neither unknown or unregarded."

Governor Clinton expressed similar sentiments. Meanwhile, festivities continued throughout the city. Cape's Tavern was the scene of uninterrupted enthusiasm for several days. On the 28th, an entertainment was there given to the Governor and Council, and also to General Washington and the army. About three hundred gentlemen "graced the feast." Among the toasts drank were :

The Protectors of the rights of mankind.

The Constitution of the State of New York.

May the spirit which produced our happy Constitution be its continual support.

May the Sun of American Liberty spread its influence to the end of the earth.

The records of the time state that the evening was spent "in great good humor, hilarity and mirth, becoming the joyous occasion of their meeting." On December 2d, another entertainment was given at the same place by the Governor to His Christian Majesty's ambassador, the Chevalier de la Luzerne. Washington and about 100 gentlemen were present. In the evening, there was a grand display of fireworks on the Bowling Green in celebration of the Definitive Treaty of Peace, the first being preceded by

A dove descending with the olive branch, which communicated the fire to a marron battery.

On Thursday, the 4th of December, Washington bade his officers farewell. Those who had remained in the city assembled that day at Fraunces' Tavern to take final leave of their illustrious commander. The event was as impressive as the gathering was remarkable. "The passions of human nature," says a writer, "were never more tenderly agitated than in this interesting and

distressful scene." His Excellency having filled a glass of wine, thus addressed his brave colleagues:

"With a heart full of love and gratitude I now take leave of you; I most devoutly wish that your latter days may be as prosperous and happy as your former ones have been glorious and honorable."

This utterance was received in solemn silence. Having drank, he added,

"I cannot come to each of you to take my leave, but shall be obliged if each of you will come and take me by the hand."

Fervent wishes were expressed for the General's future. In a letter published on the 6th of December of that year in the Pennsylvania Packet, the following additional details of Washington's leavetaking are thus given: "General Knox, who stood nearest to him [General Washington], turned and grasped his hand, while the tears flowed over the cheeks of each. The Commander-in-Chief kissed him. This he did to each of his officers, while tears and sobs stifled utterance." Soon after, in most affectionate terms, the Governor, the Council and a large number of citizens of distinction also bade his Excellency adieu. A corps of light infantry was drawn up in line about two o'clock, and Washington soon afterwards passed through them on his way to Whitehall, where he embarked in his barge for Powles Hook, N. J., now Jersey City. With this act, Washington's military career in the Revolution ceased. In due course, he arrived at Annapolis, resigned his commission as General of the United States Army, and retired to his home at Mount Vernon, carrying with him the proud encomium of being "first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen."

OLD LANDMARKS ALONG THE ROUTE.

On the Kingsbridge Road, at about 180th street, was a well-known hostelry named the "Blue Bell." This tavern stood for more than a century and a half. Washington and Governor Clinton here reviewed the troops on the 24th of November, 1783. A mile and a half below, on the east side of the present St. Nicholas avenue, about where 126th street intersects, was Day's Tavern, also a noted house, around which the bullets whistled during the battle of Harlem Plains. Here the troops encamped prior to their entry into the city. Another place worthy of mention was McGowan's, and just below the Black Horse Tavern of the Revolution, which stood on the north-east corner of the present Central Park.

The "Bull's Head" Tavern, which stood at the head of the Bowery, famous as the last stopping place of Washington before he made his entry into the city, was kept as early as 1770,

by one Richard Varian, who was keeper of the public slaughter-house. He served on board a privateer during the war, was taken prisoner and carried to Halifax, where he remained until peace was proclaimed, when he came back to New York, agreeably surprised to find his wife in possession of the old hostelry. The "Bull's Head" was the resort of butchers and drovers, and was widely known.

The "Tea-Water Pump," at which the troops halted, was a spring of excellent water on the west side of Chatham street, and was long in great request, and carried from door to door. Cape's Tavern, which stood on the site of the present Boreel Building, corner of Thames street and Broadway, was the famous public house of the city before and during the Revolution. It had been the city residence of Governor de Lancey, and with its large stables and proximity to the ferries and to the great eastern highway, it was an admirable tavern site. Here, in 1754, a noted host, Edward Willett, opened with the sign of the Province Arms, and under the name of the York Arms, the City Arms, and later the State Arms it was known. It must be remembered that in the old days taverns were known by their signs, which accounts for their various designations. At the beginning it was kept by one Hicks, who was succeeded by Roubalet and Cape. After the war on its site was erected the famous City Hotel.

Fraunce's Tavern, now called Washington's Headquarters, stands at the junction of Pearl and Broad streets. It is at present kept as a saloon by Jacob Etzel. On the second floor, in what was known as the "long room," Washington took leave of his officers, on the 4th of December, 1783. In this room the New York Chamber of Commerce was organized in 1768. It has five windows overlooking Broad and Pearl streets. It still contains an old round table which is alleged to have been in use in 1783. The house was originally two and a half stories high; in olden times a handsome staircase led to the principal room. The Exchange was close by, and from the records of that day we find that the tavern was frequented by many business men, and that sales of real estate were made there in addition to the transaction of other matters of general public importance. Built about 1710, by one of the de Lanceys, it was afterwards purchased by Fraunces, and has since 1768 been without interruption a house of entertainment.

It is proposed to celebrate the centennial anniversary of Washington's farewell to his officers by a turtle feast in the old style, served in the "long room," on Tuesday, 4th December next; also by an informal assembly of merchants, who will lunch in Washington's "long room" on that day.

AN INTERESTING LETTER.

Through the courtesy of Mr. John Austin Stevens, whose grandfather was Lieutenant-Colonel of the regiment hereunder mentioned, we are enabled to give the following letter, copied from the original, now in the possession of Major Bauman's granddaughter, Mrs. C. P. Marsh, of this city. Its contents may be accepted as evidence of the friendly rivalry which then existed among the officers of outlying regiments for the honor of taking possession of the metropolis.

WEST POINT, 22d of August, 1783.

Sir: It is strongly suggested that the British are to leave New York, and that part of the infantry now in the line are to march into the city as soon as it is evacuated. I am therefore requested by the officers of the two remaining companies of the New York regiment of artillery to solicit your Excellency that they might be included in having the honor to take possession of their metropolis in case any troops should be ordered for that purpose, as we are the only State troops in the line we know of, would think us highly honored should your Excellency intercede for us on the occasion. One captain, lieutenant, one subaltern, one sergeant, one corporal, and twenty matrosses are under marching orders to go to Oswego. I have the honor to be with great respect,

Your Excellency's most obedient and humble servant,

S. BAUMAN,
Major of Artillery.

GOV. CLINTON.

ORDER OF PROCESSION, NOV. 26, 1883.

Grand Marshal.
Aides.
Honorary Marshals.
Escort to the Marshals, on horseback.
The Governor.
The President.
The Lieutenant-Governor of New York.
The President of the United States Senate.
The Chief Justice United States Supreme Court.
The Chief Justice New York Court of Appeals.
Members of the Cabinet.
State officers of New York.
Governors of original Thirteen States and their Staffs.
General, Lieutenant-General, and General Hancock and Staff.
Admiral, Vice-Admiral, and Commandant of New York Navy Yard, and Staff.
Members of Joint Committee of the Celebration.

II.

MILITARY.

First Division National Guard, State of New York, under command of Major-General Shaler.

Second Division National Guard, State of New York, or such portion thereof as may be present.

Visiting Military Organizations.

United States Army and Navy (on school or training ships).

III.

MILITARY ORDERS.

Society of the Cincinnati.

Veterans of the War of 1812.

Veterans of the Mexican War.

Military Order of the Loyal Legion.

Grand Army of the Republic.

Veterans of the Civil War.

Sons of the Revolution. (Civic.)

IV.

CIVIC SOCIETIES.

This Division contains the various Civic Societies of the City of New York, which take part in the parade. The Tammany Society or Columbian Order will lead the Division.

The New York Historical Society, with delegates from kindred Associations from other States.

The Chamber of Commerce, the Marine Society, both organized before the Revolution, and the various Commercial bodies and Exchanges of the city appear here also.

Up to the time of going to press this programme was the only one officially agreed upon by the Joint Committee, but the full order of procession will be issued in a detached form when ready.

THE WATER PARADE.

A remarkable and novel feature of the ceremonies of the day is the Parade of the Steam Vessels of the harbor. Over four hundred, from the largest steamboat to the smallest canal tug, will appear in line. The Admiral of the day is the Hon. John H. Starin, who has announced the following official programme:

Line to form 9:30 A. M. sharp from a barge anchored abreast of Bedloe's Island, all boats to form to the southward of said barge.

Upon the arrival of the Admiral's flag-ship at the head of the line, and the firing of one gun from the flag-ship, the line will move.

The course to be up the North River to a point about opposite Sixty-fifth Street. Turn to the eastward, move south near the New York shore, round the Battery, and pass the flag-ship which shall anchor at that point and review the parade, up the East River to a point opposite Twenty-third Street

Ferry. Turn to eastward and proceed down near the Brooklyn shore. Pass Governor's Island to the northward and proceed to Bay Ridge, where parade will be dismissed.

UNVEILING OF WASHINGTON'S STATUE.

Secretary GEORGE WILSON, of the Chamber of Commerce, announces that about one o'clock on Evacuation Day, the statue of George Washington, erected on the Sub-Treasury steps, will be unveiled. This statue has been placed there by voluntary subscriptions, under the auspices of the Chamber of Commerce, to commemorate the act of Washington, who took the oath on that spot, April 30th, 1789, as the first President of the United States of America. The committee of arrangements are Messrs. ROYAL PHELPS, A. A. LOW, S. B. CHITTENDEN, MORRIS K. JESUP, HENRY F. SPAULDING, and BENJAMIN G. ARNOLD. The sculptor is JOHN Q. A. WARD.

The programme to be observed is as follows :

1. Mr. GEORGE W. LANE, President of the Chamber of Commerce, will take the chair as presiding officer.

2. The Rev. RICHARD S. STORRS, D.D., will offer prayer.

3. Mr. ROYAL PHELPS, Chairman of the Special Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, will report to Mr. LANE, President of the Chamber, the completion of the work committed to their charge.

4. His Excellency, Governor CLEVELAND, will unveil the statue.

5. Mr. LANE will tender the statue to the Government of the United States, in whose custody it will thereafter remain, pursuant to the Act of Congress.

6. The President of the United States will accept the statue on behalf of the Government.

7. The Hon. GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS will deliver the oration.

8. The assemblage will be invited to sing Old Hundred.

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow !
Praise Him, all creatures here below !
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host !
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost !

9. The Right Reverend HENRY C. POTTER, D.D., Assistant Bishop of the Diocese of New York, will pronounce a Benediction, which will conclude the ceremonies.

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